



# NEWS RELEASE

*Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation*

*Las Vegas Field Office*

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## **Identity Thief Sentenced to Prison for Making False Claims**

### ***Used deceased individuals identification to file false tax returns.***

**Las Vegas** – A Las Vegas man was sentenced today to 30 months in federal prison, three years of supervised release and ordered to pay \$67,115 in restitution to the United States for conspiring with others in making false claims for tax refunds from the United States Government announced Special Agent in Charge of IRS-Criminal Investigation John Collins.

According to the plea agreement, from approximately June of 2011 to February of 2013 Nicholas Pappas, 29, conspired with others to file false U.S. Individual Income Tax Returns with the Internal Revenue Service. Pappas and others used the identities of deceased individuals to prepare false tax returns. Pappas and others obtained the identities through internet websites "rootsweb" or "ancestry.com". The defendant and others used Turbo Tax to prepare and file the false tax returns by using fictitious amounts of wages, withholding and various Schedule A deductions placed onto the tax returns. The false returns were electronically filed with the IRS and directed the IRS to deposit the fraudulent income tax refunds onto pre-paid debit cards that Pappas and others had obtained in the names of the deceased individuals.

*"Identity thieves have figured out that if they can steal social security numbers they can file false returns with the IRS. But what they haven't figured out is we can follow the false filed returns right back to the source" said Special Agent in Charge John Collins. "The IRS is vigilant in our investigation of these schemes and will continue to work with prosecutors to combat this type of criminal conduct."*

Pappas admitted that he was responsible for the filing of 30 false tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service that sought approximately \$248,000 from the U.S. Treasury.

The case was investigated by IRS Criminal Investigation and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nick Dickenson.

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